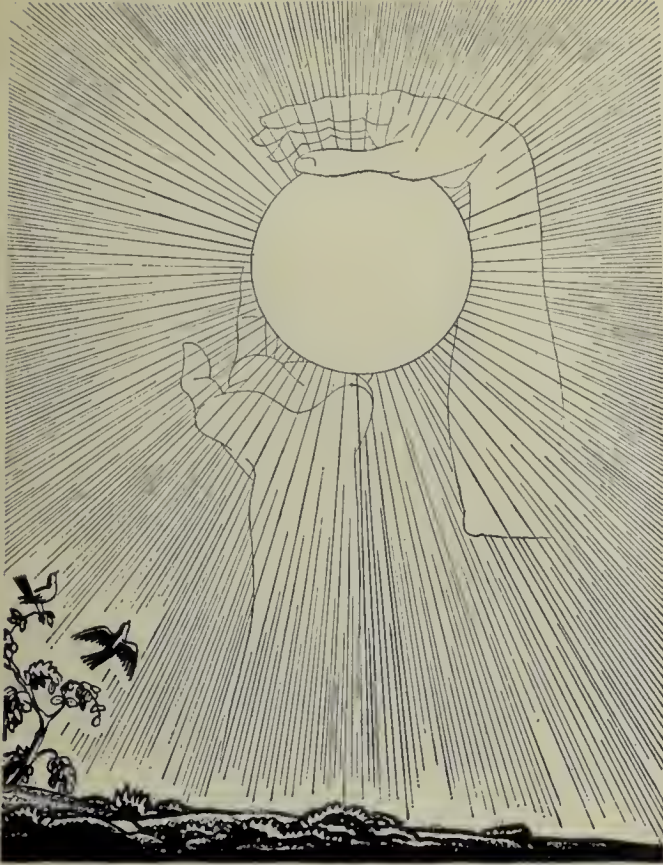


1986



*Let there be light: and there was light.
And God saw the light, that it was good.*

Rockwell Kent.

LET THERE BE LIGHT!

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LET THERE BE LIGHT!

Thirty-Second Annual Report
of the
National Society for the Prevention of Blindness

1946

National Society for the
Prevention of Blindness, Inc.

1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.

Let There Be Light!

And God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.
And God saw the light, that it was good.

WHEN primitive man discovered how to kindle a fire he laid the foundation not only for the cook stove and the Bessemer furnace, but for the torch, the oil lamp, the gaslight and the incandescent lamp. He kindled the lamp of learning—the source of civilization and progress.

The development of man from primitive times has been accompanied by changes, some of which have created new problems. The extension of life expectancy has increased the incidence of many diseases of the eye that primitive man escaped, because he rarely lived long enough for his eyes to deteriorate. Apart from the degenerative diseases of old age, certain diseases now occur in all ages of life which appear to be intensified rather than diminished by civilization, such as tuberculosis, cancer and venereal diseases. The machine age—another result of man's discovery of fire—has brought with it the problems of industrial accidents, a further hazard to eyesight.

The National Society for the Prevention of Blindness is concerned with combating these threats to eyesight and with carrying on a continuous campaign to conserve sight. One of its earliest endeavors—started in 1908—was to bring about the eradication of blindness in newborn babies from ophthalmia neonatorum, "babies' sore eyes." Through the Society's educational campaign and its mustering of official and social forces, blindness from this disease has been reduced by more than 75 per cent. The Society's campaign for safety in industry, and its activities for the development of "sight-saving classes" for partially seeing children, also have long records of accomplishment.

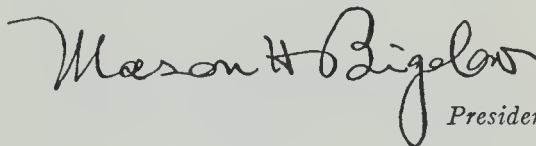
During 1946, the Society's current and future program has been reviewed by a special committee, under the chairmanship of Prof. Ira V. Hiscock, with a view to adapting the program to

changing conditions and thus increasing the Society's usefulness. Outstanding among the Society's achievements during the past year was the holding of a two-weeks' Institute at the Society's offices, and a three-day Conference at the Pennsylvania Hotel, New York City. The Institute offered opportunity for concentrated instruction of a number of prevention of blindness workers who are carrying on local programs, and the Conference served as a refresher course for industrial workers, social workers, teachers, nurses, medical personnel, and others engaged in prevention of blindness activities. These are but two of the year's notable and varied activities.

That the Society enjoys the confidence of its members and donors is evidenced by the fact that they have increased in number during the past year, from 37,650 to 40,350. To them, and to all others working directly or indirectly toward a world in which there truly is light, the Society expresses its gratitude.

The Society reports with regret that Mrs. Eleanor Brown Merrill, its executive director, is retiring as of March 1, 1947. Having had the benefit of her services for more than twenty-five years—the past eight as executive director—the Society takes this occasion to express its great indebtedness and gratitude to Mrs. Merrill for her devoted, conscientious and effective service. We all wish her many years of enjoyment of well-earned leisure.

Dr. Franklin M. Foote, appointed medical director in September, 1946, will assume the executive directorship. Dr. Foote has had a distinguished career with the Connecticut State Department of Health, the New York City Health Department and in the Medical Corps of the United States Army. We look forward with confidence to his successful administration.


President

Columbia University, New York City; University of Southern California, Graduate School of Social Work, Los Angeles, California; and Washington University, George Warren Brown School of Social Work, St. Louis, Missouri.

Industrial Eye Conservation Program • • •

The Society was called upon by the Bureau of Industrial Hygiene, of the New Jersey State Department of Health to help plan an industrial eye health program. The plans include visual testing of employees, color and lighting analyses of working areas, analysis of hazards, and ophthalmologic consultation when required.

The newly organized Detroit Society for the Prevention of Blindness, an agency located in a highly industrialized area, recognized its opportunity for an industrial eye conservation campaign, and called upon the Society for assistance in considering a cooperative program with the Health Institute of the local CIO. The Society's representative gave eight lectures, and important conferences were held with safety leaders and others responsible for administering the medical and health activities of large industrial concerns—as, for instance, the Ford Motor Company and the General Motors Corporation.

Institute on Eye Health • • •

To meet the immediate needs of a number of prevention of blindness workers, the Society presented an intensive course of lectures and demonstrations at headquarters during two weeks in June. The Society was fortunate in obtaining the voluntary assistance of leading eye physicians, public health and social workers, and other technicians in presenting the Institute. Fifteen registrants representing eight states attended regularly, and three additional persons attended selected lectures. Among the representatives attending the course were new executives from three voluntary prevention of blindness agencies—Maryland, Illinois, and Detroit Societies for the Prevention of Blindness. Others consisted of two members of the staff of the New York City Office of the Veterans Administration; two assistant supervisors from the New York Rehabilitation Office; a supervisor of special education in New York State; an ophthalmologist from

the Industrial Hygiene Division, New Jersey Department of Health; and representatives from the Commission for the Blind of the New York Department of Social Welfare, the Tennessee Department of Public Welfare, the Missouri Commission for the Blind, the Connecticut State Board of Education of the Blind, and the New York office of the U. S. Public Health Service.

Research Activities • • •

The Society is joint sponsor, with the American Social Hygiene Association, of a study on syphilitic optic atrophy, by Dr. Walter L. Bruetsch, director of research, Central State Hospital, Indianapolis, Indiana. In the past year, the study has evoked much interest in both American and Mexican medical circles. Dr. Bruetsch's exhibit on this subject was awarded the "Distinguished Service Diploma" for its excellence, by the Latin American Medical Association and the Seventh National Congress of Mexican Surgeons in Mexico City.

The relationship between German measles in expectant mothers and congenital cataracts in their offspring is the subject of another study in which the Society is interested. With its assistance, Dr. Herbert C. Miller, professor of pediatrics, School of Medicine, University of Kansas, Kansas City, Kansas, has undertaken research which, it is hoped, will reveal means of preventing blindness from this cause.

Participation in Nationwide Meetings • • •

The Society has had opportunity to collaborate with a number of national health and welfare organizations in the promotion of sight conservation activities. At the first postwar meeting of the American Medical Association, in San Francisco, the subject of early recognition of glaucoma was graphically presented by the Society's Committee on Glaucoma, under the chairmanship of Dr. Willis S. Knighton. This topic was also presented in exhibit form before the meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology. Another exhibit unit shown at this meeting dealt with the subject, "Essential Sight Conservation Services in the Community." Covering the topics of Health, Education, Safety, Welfare, and Rehabilitation, the unit was

shown at the 1946 Biennial Nursing Convention, Atlantic City, N. J.; the American Public Health Association, Cleveland, Ohio; the National Conference of Social Work, Buffalo, N. Y.; and at the Society's own Conference.

Vision Conservation in Industry was featured as an exhibit at the Annual Conference on Industrial Health, Chicago, Illinois; the Greater New York Safety Conference, New York City; the National Safety Congress in Chicago, Illinois; and the Health Education Section of the CIO meeting in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

The Society participated in the National Conference of Social Work in Buffalo, not only by maintaining an exhibit booth and consultation services, but by conducting a meeting on the subject of "Integration of Eye Services in Programs of Social Agencies," under the chairmanship of Harry O. Page, New York State Department of Social Welfare. The papers given at this meeting were not only of teaching value to social workers but, in printed form, they have been used by other professional personnel engaged in sight conservation work.

In Brief • • •

Glaucoma.—With the guidance of its Committee on Glaucoma, the Society has continued its campaign against this damaging disease. The New York City demonstration clinic, begun with the Society's help, at the Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital, has proved an important center of learning to which physicians from other hospitals here and abroad are turning for advice in establishing their own local glaucoma services. Community agencies functioning in prevention of blindness work have also requested the Society's recommendations on setting up local educational projects for the control of glaucoma.

Summer Courses.—During the summer, the Society cooperated in conducting courses for the preparation of supervisors and teachers of classes for partially seeing children, at two universities and two normal colleges. Special instruction of this type was instituted by the Society some years ago; however, to an increasing degree, educational authorities have recognized their responsibility for providing such preparation although still looking to the Society for professional advice. *Education and Health*

of the *Partially Seeing Child*, published by Columbia University Press for the Society, continued to be in great demand, requiring a revision and several reprintings.

Study on Causes of Blindness.—The Society, in cooperation with the American Foundation for the Blind, continued its study of causes of blindness among children in schools for the blind, the study of the records for the year 1945–46 having been compiled during the year. Of special interest was the study of causes of blindness inaugurated in Wayne County, Michigan, by the newly organized Detroit Society for the Prevention of Blindness, under the guidance of the National Society.

Sight Conservation Program of Delta Gamma Fraternity.—Calling upon the Society for suggestions, the Delta Gamma Fraternity, an international social organization of college women, has modified its sight conservation project to include an annual contribution of \$1,000. for scholarships in the field of prevention of blindness to be exemplified by specialized prevention study, training of orthoptic technicians, training of teachers for sight-saving classes, and training of workers for the preschool blind. One of the Society's staff was named to serve on the professional committee for screening the scholarship candidates.

"Eye Health—A Teaching Handbook for Nurses."—The long awaited publication of *Eye Health—A Teaching Handbook for Nurses* was issued in June, 1946, and before the end of the year the sale of the book, at cost, had exhausted an edition of 2,000 copies and required a duplication of the printing. This 108-paged monograph was especially useful in supplementing the Society's educational program with nurses.

Leslie Dana Gold Medal.—Once again it was the pleasant duty of the Society to play a part in the selection of the recipient of the Leslie Dana Gold Medal, given each year for outstanding work in the cause of prevention of blindness. The medal was presented this year to Dr. Harry S. Gradle, Chicago, Illinois, during the meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology in Chicago, October 17, 1946.

Summary of Finances

EXPENSES DURING 1946

Office Maintenance	\$26,846.07	
Salaries	102,428.38	
Field Service	5,991.71	
Publications and Exhibits	17,273.89	
Distribution Costs	18,478.65	
Meetings and Courses	4,455.16	
Cooperative Projects	3,493.25	
Annuities and Insurance	7,519.05	
Vision Testing Charts	2,478.12	
Films	2,558.84	
Committee on Plan and Scope . . .	3,857.81	\$195,380.93

INCOME DURING 1946—Operating Account

Donations		
New	\$25,096.71	
Renewal	121,732.77	
Memberships		
New	1,178.50	
Renewal	19,122.80	\$167,130.78
Honoraria, Royalties, <i>Sight-Saving Review</i> , Other Publications, Films and Vision Testing Charts	12,562.52	
Income, Endowment and Reserve Funds	32,576.95	
Income from Trust Funds (not administered by the Society)		
Wendel Foundation	\$2,875.00	
Others	9,486.15	12,361.15
	<u>\$224,631.40</u>	
Transferred to Reserve Fund . . .	29,250.47	\$195,380.93
Total Resources at December 31, 1945		<u>\$699,597.54</u>
Legacies and other receipts (including distribution of principal of Wendel Foundation of \$15,000.00) received in 1946 and placed in Reserve and Endowment Funds	\$23,691.22	
Income in excess of expenses, 1946	27,563.43	
	<u>\$51,254.65</u>	
Net loss on sale or realization of		
Stocks and Bonds	4,523.42	46,731.23
Total Resources at December 31, 1946		<u>\$746,328.77*</u>

* This includes mortgages and securities at book value. It does not include the following: Trust Funds not administered by the Society, 1/40th share in the unliquidated properties of the Wendel Foundation, and the Society's share in estates in the course of administration.

The foregoing statement is based on the report of Barrow, Wade, Guthrie and Company, by whom the accounts of the Society were audited. A copy of the report will be sent to anyone requesting it.

The Executive Director is required by the Board of Directors to submit a detailed statement of proposed expenditures and to account for all sums spent in accordance with budget appropriations. Vouchers are on file for every expenditure.

The Society's main service, including preparation and distribution of material, such as vision testing charts, films, and publications, is rendered through the work of an executive staff. This staff is composed of professional personnel qualified to deal with a wide range of scientific and technical facts and procedures, and competent to work with other agencies and individuals through whom the movement for sight conservation may be furthered. Secretarial and clerical assistants comprise the remainder of the office force. During 1946, the number on the monthly payroll averaged 36 persons. Officers and directors receive no salaries, with the exception of the Secretary, who is employed as a permanent member of the Society's staff.

The total of \$167,130.78 received in annual contributions represents 32,832 gifts from approximately 30,000 persons, and indicates a growing interest on the part of the public.

Net receipts from legacies and special gifts in 1946 were \$23,691.22, including distribution of principal of Wendel Foundation amounting to \$15,000.00.

Form of Bequest

I give and bequeath to the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, Inc., a corporation created under the laws of the State of New York, the sum of Dollars
..... Dollars
for its corporate purposes.

National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, Inc.

1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.

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